

TO THE
STARTFORTH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report, 1904.

GENTLEMEN,

I.

I have again the honour to present to you my annual report, and it gives me all the more pleasure to do so, as I think you will consider it a very satisfactory one. The rate of general mortality has been the lowest on record—only 26 deaths having been registered during the year—namely, 9·36 per 1,000 of population, estimated up to the middle of the year (2,777).

There was likewise a further reduction in the infantile mortality—only three deaths having occurred under the age of one year, or 1·08 per 1,000 of population. One death was ascribed to Bronchitis.

Seven deaths were registered amongst persons over 65 years of age, the oldest being a female 85 years old.

Diseases of the Respiratory Organs accounted for two deaths, only giving an annual rate of 0·72 per 1,000 inhabitants.

On the other hand I am sorry to have to record a great increase in the number of deaths ascribed to Phthisis and other Tubercular Diseases—five of these having been registered—equal to an annual rate of 1·80 per 1,000 of population.

Heart Disease accounted for three deaths.

Two deaths were ascribed to Infectious Disease.

Fifty-six births were registered during the year.

II.


The rate of general sickness was low during the whole year, with the exception of the month of May, when, owing to cold and damp weather, numerous cases of Rheumatic and Lung affections prevailed in the district.

Infectious Disease on the other hand showed a higher rate of prevalence than during the preceding year. Sixteen cases of Infectious Disease were notified to me, namely :—

Smallpox	...	...	...	1 case
Diphtheria	...	...	...	1 „
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	1 „
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	13 cases
Total				...
				16 cases

The case of **Smallpox** occurred at Cat Castle Quarry huts, near Lartington, and was contracted at Otley, near Leeds. Immediately on detection it was removed to the Council's Infectious Hospital at Hury, the huts all disinfected, the patient's clothing destroyed, and all contacts vaccinated and kept in quarantine for two weeks. I am glad to say no other case occurred in the district.

The case of **Diphtheria** was notified from Hutton village, which is composed of very old houses, many of them imperfectly ventilated and badly drained.



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The cases of **Scarlet Fever** occurred principally in and around the village of Startforth, the infection being conveyed thither from the adjacent town of Barnard Castle. Most of the cases were mild, and could be treated and isolated at home, but I found it necessary to remove four to the Hospital at Hury.

The case of **Puerperal Fever** occurred at a farm near Bowes, and was caused by the very bad sanitary state of the farm-house—a very ill-ventilated and dirty stable and cow-byre being actually situated immediately under the patient's bedroom.

In addition to these notified diseases there was a considerable prevalence of Whooping Cough and Measles in various parts of the district, so that it was found necessary to close the schools in the villages of Barningham, Scargill, and Startforth for a short period.

In connection with the methods of dealing with Infectious Diseases, I do not consider the present Hospital as satisfactory, owing to its situation and inaccessibility.

III.

With regard to the sanitary conditions of the district, and the means adopted for the maintenance of the public health, I beg to report that I have during the year inspected the greater part of it, and have had occasion to bring to your notice deficiencies in the water supply, sanitary arrangements, and ventilation of several dwellings, particularly farm-houses, such as West Middleton, near Hutton; High and Low Swinston, and Gutters, in Scargill; and Howlulgill, near Bowes. I am glad to say that some of these have been attended to and remedied.

The water supply of the district has been on the whole satisfactory—the quantity abundant, and of wholesome quality.

Dairies and cowsheds have been regularly inspected, and kept in a sanitary condition.

The administration of the Factory Act has worked satisfactorily. In my district there is only one factory and several workshops, chiefly wheelwrights and joiners. I have visited them frequently, and found nothing to complain of from a sanitary point of view.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

ALFRED H. SEVIER, M.B.

February 25th 1905

To

The Chairman & Guardians
The Stockbridge Union

Gentlemen

I beg herewith to hand you my Report on the Health of the District for the year 1904. I also enclose Tabular Statements as required by the Local Government Board - of the sickness & mortality within the District, classified according to diseases, ages, & localities.

The Health of the District, taken generally during the past year may be considered unusually good.

There were 79 deaths registered, giving a rate of 11.3 per 1000 of the estimated population (vide Vital Statistics, Table I). This is considerably below the average, the average death rate for the past ten years being 13.3.

There were 11 deaths of children under one year of age.

Five deaths took place in the Stockbridge Union Workhouse.

The largest number of deaths, during the year was certified as being due to Heart-disease, in some one of its various forms, no less than 17 being attributed to this cause, cancer this year only claimed 4, Bronchitis 6, Pneumonia 5, other diseases of the Respiratory organs 2, Phthisis 3, other Tubercular diseases 3, Enteritis 2, Premature birth 3, Diarrhoea 1, Parturition 1, Suicides 2 & all other causes 30.

The Births registered during the year 1904 numbered 149; 61 males & 88 females, this gives an average of 20.94 calculated per 1000 of estimated population.

There was an increase, as compared with last year, of the number of cases of Infectious disease reported there being 29 in all.

Of these, Scarlet fever was responsible for no less than 24, there having been an epidemic of that disease in the Wallops, necessitating the closing of the schools.

That this would be a pretty severe epidemic was to be expected, as the first Child developed the rash in the evening of the day, the afternoon of which had been spent at a large social gathering of children.

In addition to the above, 3 cases of mild Erysipelas, & 2 of Enteric fever were notified to me. The Erysipelas was not in any case traceable to insanitary surroundings.

Of the two cases of Enteric fever, one was found to be due to the use of impure drinking water, & the matter rectified - the other case could not be accounted for, & the assumption is that the disease was contracted away from the neighbourhood.

I have no Report to make under the Factories & Workshops Act, there being no places of business which come under that head in the District.

The Bakeries have been systematically visited by the Sanitary Inspector, & as no communication regarding them has been received from the County Council, this has doubtless been done to the Satisfaction of the Inspector of Factories &c.

House to House Inspections were made during the year, where deemed desirable, & fourteen water certificates were granted.

On the whole, the very Sanitary Condition of the District may be regarded as a matter for congratulation.

The water supply has been good, + very plentiful
The disposal of excrement in the District is mainly
on the Pail system, + care is taken to see that
these are properly emptied, privy pits unless
as cemented vaults are not much in use now
There are very few Piggeries near public roads
+ very little complaint is made of those that
do exist,

Several new houses have been built in the
District.

The custom of throwing refuse into the river
should be discouraged as much as possible

I am, Gentlemen

Yours faithfully.

Walter K. Lockers

M. D. H.

